

The court has reviewed de novo the portions of the M&R to which plaintiff objected. The scope of judicial review of a final decision regarding disability benefits under the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. § 405(g), is limited to determining whether substantial evidence supports the Commissioner's factual findings and whether the Commissioner applied the correct legal standards. See, e.g., Walls v. Barnhart, 296 F.3d 287, 290 (4th Cir. 2002); Hays v. Sullivan, 907 F.2d 1453, 1456 (4th Cir. 1990). Substantial evidence is evidence which a "reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion." Richardson v. Perales, 402 U.S. 389, 401 (1971) (quotation omitted). It "consists of more than a mere scintilla of evidence but may be less than a preponderance." Smith v. Chater, 99 F.3d 635, 638 (4th Cir. 1996). This court may not reweigh the evidence or substitute its judgment for that of the Commissioner. See, e.g., Hays, 907 F.2d at 1456. Rather, in determining whether substantial evidence supports the Commissioner's decision, the court's review is limited to whether the Commissioner analyzed the relevant evidence and sufficiently explained her findings and rationale concerning the evidence. See, e.g., Sterling Smokeless Coal Co. v. Akers, 131 F.3d 438, 439–40 (4th Cir. 1997).

Plaintiff's objections restate arguments made to Judge Jones concerning the ALJ's analysis of the opinion of plaintiff's treating physician, the vocational expert's testimony, and plaintiff's RFC. Compare [D.E. 17]1–4 with [D.E. 11] 3–6, 8–9. Both Judge Jones and the ALJ, however, applied the proper legal standards. See [D.E. 16] 3–12, 16–19. Moreover, substantial evidence supports the ALJ's analysis. See id. 3–19. Accordingly, the court adopts the M&R and overrules the objections.

In sum, plaintiff's objections to the M&R [D.E. 17] are OVERRULED, plaintiff's motion for judgment on the pleadings [D.E. 10] is DENIED, defendant's motion for judgment on the pleadings [D.E. 12] is GRANTED, defendant's final decision is AFFIRMED, and this action is DISMISSED. The clerk shall close the case.

SO ORDERED. This 2 day of February 2016.


JAMES C. DEVER III
Chief United States District Judge